

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 and 14-18 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 9, and 16 have been amended. Claims 3, 4, 12, 14, 17, and 18 have been cancelled.

Claims 1-3, 5-12, and 14-17 have been rejected. Claims 1, 3, 5-10, 12, 14-15 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Onoki et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,076,863). Claims 1, 3, 5-10, 12, and 14-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Grandahl (U.S. Patent No. 4,919,663). Claims 2 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Onoki et al. or Grendahl et al. Claims 4 and 18 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

The Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter. In the Detailed Action, the Examiner indicated that Claims 4 and 18 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, the Applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 9 to include the limitations of claims 4 and 18, and all intervening claims, respectively. No new matter has been added. Claims 3, 4, 12, 14, 17, and 18 have been cancelled to expedite prosecution. The Applicant reserves the right to file a continuation application for the claims cancelled herein.

CONCLUSION

Should the Examiner determine that any further action is necessary to place this application into better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned representative at the number listed below. No further fees are believed due, however, if there are any fees due, please charge to Deposit Account No. 50-0653.

Respectfully submitted,

 2/9/04
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